THE WHY, WHEN AND HOW *of* REVIVALS

Bishop W. F. Mallalieu

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The

WHY, WHEN, AND HOW

OF REVIVALS

By

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To My Mother

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CHAPTER I

Perilous Times

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Perilous Times

Hark, how the watchmen cry!
  Attend the trumpet's sound;
Stand to your arms, the foe is nigh,
  The powers of hell surround.
Who bow to Christ's command,
  Your arms and hearts prepare;
The day of battle is at hand—
  Go forth to glorious war.

—*Charles Wesley.*

O Lord, thy work revive,
  In Zion's gloomy hour,
And let our dying graces live
  By thy restoring power.

O let thy chosen few
  Awake to earnest prayer;
Their covenant again renew,
  And walk in filial fear.

—*Phœbe H. Brown.*

O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.—Hab. iii, 2.

And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet.—Mark xiii, 7.

Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.—1 Cor. xvi, 13.

Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For ye wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. —Eph. vi, 11, 12.

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.—2 Tim. iii, 1, 2.

THE present hour is a time of bewilderment. The world is full of unrest. Christendom is in a perilous condition. Turn which way we will, we are confronted by portentous clouds full of danger and death. These things are so for the reason that we are living in a transitional age. The customs and habits of ages have been revolutionized by steam and electricity. Knowledge is increased, but private morals and civic virtues are far below the proper standard. The rum power was never more masterful, malignant, and aggressive than now. It antagonizes the kingdom of Christ constantly, vigorously, and everywhere. The dance, the theater, vile pictures, and vile literature combine to corrupt and destroy our youth. The Sabbath is recklessly desecrated;

the house of God is abandoned, and the Bible is despised by millions of our people. Here and there are those who occupy chairs in schools of theology or pulpits in the churches who for the sake of appearing smart align themselves with the scoffers and infidels of this and other times and countries. Too many working people, toilers with hand or brain, have taken themselves outside the range of Christian influence and more and more are becoming utterly earthy and of the earth. A thousand remedies might be proposed for this sad and alarming condition of affairs, but in all the range of possibilities there is but one sure remedy, and that is the living Gospel of the Son of God. It will surely destroy sin and cure all human ills if it can be put in practice in daily life. There is absolutely no call for any new truth; the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ meet in the fullest manner all the demands of these disturbed times. It is absolutely certain that in the dissemination of these teachings there is no occasion for extravagant, sensational contrivances. What is needed is the plain, simple, intense, persistent presentation in all our pulpits of the whole round of Gospel truths. Then there must be holy living

on the part of all preachers and professors. In these the unbelieving world has a right to demand an illustration of the reality of Christian truth. The example must go with the precept. There is nothing like holy living to give emphasis to the Gospel.

CHAPTER II

Faith Encouraged

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Faith Encouraged

Workman of God! O lose not heart,
But learn what God is like;
And in the darkest battlefield
Thou shalt know where to strike.
—*F. W. Faber.*

And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.—Gal. vi, 9.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.—Psa. cxxvi, 5, 6.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.—1 Cor. xv, 58.

It must be clear to every thoughtful Christain, and especially to every Methodist, that the thoughts just presented suggest the importance and necessity of a widespread, thorough, and profound revival of old-time religion in all our churches. More machinery, more organizations, more patent appliances, will not suffice. Summer schools, lecture courses, fairs, festivals, picnics, and all the

rest, are utterly unavailing. We may have all these things and still a spiritual death may smite all our churches. We must find the old paths and walk in the old ways. The arm of God is not shortened that he cannot save. The power of the Holy Ghost is infinite. The blood of Jesus Christ can still cleanse from all sin. We ought to have a revival that will cover our whole country, and overlapping its remotest boundaries shall make its presence and power felt to the ends of the earth.

The aim of God's people should be to make this revival perennial rather than spasmodic. There is a constant tendency to unsteadiness in thought, faith, and Christian activity. A condition of religious life closely akin to the revival spirit ought to prevail constantly in all our churches. Sad to say, this is not the experience of very many. There are churches which exist, for the most part, in a dormant condition. They do sometimes make an effort, for two or three weeks in a year, to shake off the lethargy that oppresses them, but they soon relapse into their usual somnolent condition. Some of them do not even have a revival spasm; they live, year after year, in absolute quietness; they have no special anxiety for

themselves, and not any at all for perishing sinners. Even a spasmodic revival for such churches would be a great improvement.

The great, present, pressing need is that all our pastors and people should give more earnest attention to the development and cultivation and encouragement of a style of religious life that shall be constantly aggressive, and ever alert in the work of leading souls to the Lord Jesus Christ. If this condition, so much to be desired, shall be realized the idea must be forever abandoned that professional or non-professional evangelists are a necessity. And yet I would not in the most distant manner venture even to suggest that there are many evangelists who are not doing most excellent service, but pastors and people must come to understand that they are not an absolute necessity. The substantial, persistent revival that flourishes alike in summer's heat and winter's cold is not the creation of a mere human evangelist. Such a revival is the work of the Holy Ghost. Again, it is essential that pastor and people should be possessed, enthused with the thought that in the economy of divine grace there is never a combination of circumstances when it is justifiable to say, "Four

months and then cometh harvest." That is the language of inexcusable unbelief. That is the language of those who have never proved the all-embracing scope of the divine promises. Faith claims the fulfillment of the word of Jesus where he says: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." A gasp of life, now and then, is better than death; a spasmodic revival is better than none at all; but the ideal revival is one that abides and continues all through the year.

CHAPTER III

Wise and Timely Plans

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Wise and Timely Plans

Behold the servant of the Lord!
I wait thy guiding hand to feel;
To hear and keep thy every word,
To prove and do thy perfect will:
Joyful from my own works to cease,
Glad to fulfill all righteousness.

—*Charles Wesley.*

The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.—Prov. xx, 4.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.—Mal. iii, 10.

Revivals do not come by chance, nor do they come by arbitrary divine appointment. There have been revivals that seemed to take place without any definite prearrangement or plan, but they may be accounted for on the ground that some burdened soul, humble and unknown, has been in consultation with God; and, while others have been careless and indifferent, this one soul, like Elijah of old, has pre-

vailed in prayer, and alone has claimed the promise, that, being fulfilled, has brought refreshing showers in abundant measure to the dry and barren fields, making even desert places to bud and blossom. But the existence of such exceptional cases does not militate against the idea that God's work in grace is not altogether different from his work in nature. If the husbandman carefully plans with reference to the desired harvest, much more should the pastor plan with reference to the high and holy work which has been committed to his hands. Wise planning for revivals will certainly take into account both times and seasons. God can pour out the gracious influence of the Holy Ghost at any time upon human hearts, but there are conditions of climate, occupation, and general environment which must materially affect the results. In a farming district it might not be best, under ordinary circumstances, to undertake revival work in the very busiest part of the heated term of summer; and it might be said, on the other hand, that it would not be wise to enter upon revival services at a season of the year when usually the roads and streets are in a notoriously bad condition. Thus there are many considera-

tions to be thought of in determining the time for special revival services.

It is not possible to emphasize too strongly the unwisdom of putting off until the first week in January—the so-called Week of Prayer—the great revival effort of the year. For the past twenty or more years we Methodists have been more and more adopting this unfortunate practice. There has been an existing sentiment that it was something wonderful that all evangelical Christians should unite in the observance, and we have allowed sentiment to overrule sound, sober judgment and intelligent common sense. It is time to call a halt. Sentiment is well enough in its place, but if any business demands the exercise of our best judgment, it is that of saving the souls of the perishing. The result of yielding to sentiment in this matter is that in far too many cases we have given up the months of October and November, to say nothing of September and December, to lecture courses of various kinds, to fairs and festivals, and nearly all sorts of entertainments, and have put off our special revival work until the first week in January. We have thus lost, in affairs of minor importance, and sometimes of very doubtful utility,

the very best part of the year for public gatherings of the people, and have shut ourselves up to a time when we are more than likely to have exceedingly cold weather, and when the roads and streets may be in a condition to render it practically impossible for most of the people to attend the revival meetings if they should be held. This great and widely prevailing mistake must be corrected if we hope to secure the best possible results. In the choice months of spring and autumn let everything give way to the revival. Let all other enterprises of the church give the revival the unobstructed right of way; let the rough places be made smooth and plain, and the crooked places be made straight; let the valleys be filled and the hills leveled, and let all the people harmoniously and lovingly agree to unite in the revival efforts that surely in all parts of the country north of Mason and Dixon's line ought to commence, in case of the spring Conferences, as early as the middle of September; and in the fall Conferences, where the preachers do not move, as soon as the Conferences adjourn, and where the preachers move, as soon as they are settled in their new fields of labor.

In some sections of the country there is no

better time for revival work than the spring. April, May, and June are three of the most delightful months in the whole year. Why should they not be utilized for revival work? Surely they might be, if the thought should take possession of the minds of the pastors of our churches, and if the divinely appointed means should be employed. Taking all our Conferences together, and a very large majority of them are not held in the spring. In all cases where the appointments are not changed the preachers and their families are acquainted with the people and know the conditions of the communities and the churches where they are stationed, and they can at once enter upon a special campaign for the conversion of souls. Where preachers have been removed, and they find themselves in new fields, what better method can there be for commencing the work of the year than to make an earnest effort to secure a genuine revival of religion. Would it not be well to postpone all other matters, except such as must be immediately considered, and concentrate all the skill, strength, and toil of pastor and people upon revival work?

In revival work delays are dangerous.

"Now is the accepted time." Napoleon started too late when he set out for Moscow. Two thousand French cannon would not be laid along the walks within the Kremlin, as one day we saw them, if the ill-fated campaign had begun in season. The defeat that led to the ultimate overthrow of the French emperor was the result of needless delay.

Many a revival effort has proved a failure because wisdom was not exercised in the selection of the time of making it. No sane man in the Mississippi valley plants corn in September. There are proper times for doing all things that need to be done. God's work is not so different from all other work that we can afford to throw away all common sense when planning to carrying it forward. Nor is it of so small importance that it can be made to give place to everything else; it ought always to have the right of way. Nothing can compare with it in importance. Nothing so affects the destinies of immortal souls.

Almost every winter is exceptional; at least this is the case in the opinion of very many. Whether this be true or not, it is manifest that the winter season is not the time when the singing of birds is heard in the land. Every

winter witnesses the complete failure of unnumbered revival efforts, for the simple reason that the severe weather has interfered. Much snow, high winds, zero temperature, are the characteristics which make an exceptional winter. In such weather it is difficult and very expensive to warm churches, the roads are in bad condition and in many instances almost impassable, and the people do not come to the church for the good and sufficient reasons that it is well-nigh impossible to do so, and health and life would be imperiled by the attempt to come. It would therefore be worse than folly, it would be wicked to upbraid, much worse to scold people for not coming out to church under such circumstances. Suicide is not justifiable even in promoting revivals. Sometimes we have reasonable winter weather, and when this is the case the winter months are not unfavorable for revival work; but the rule is that all through December, January, February, and March, in the latitudes north of the Ohio, and in the Western as well as the Eastern States, the weather will be, for the most part, very unfavorable for the gathering of the congregations we wish to reach.

CHAPTER IV

God's Prompt Response

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God's Prompt Response.

Let Zion's watchmen all awake,
  And take the alarm they give;
Now let them from the mouth of God
  Their solemn charge receive.

'Tis not a cause of small import
  The pastor's care demands;
But what might fill an angel's heart,
  And filled a Saviour's hands.

—*Philip Doddridge.*

Except the Lord conduct the plan,
The best concerted schemes are vain,
  And never will succeed;
We spend our wretched strength for naught;
But if our works in thee be wrought,
  They shall be blest indeed.

—*Charles Wesley.*

Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children. . . . Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach.—Joel ii, 15-17.

Wise planning involves the idea of marshaling all the forces of the church for active co-

operation with the pastor. It will not be amiss if the pastor calls together his entire official board, and, after a season of earnest prayer, unfolds to them the deep desires of his heart. Let him tell these men of God, who bear the burdens of the church, that he wants, that he must have, their sympathy and help; let him get them to renew their vows of consecration and seek for a special baptism of the Holy Ghost for the great work that is to be undertaken. It ought to be a comparatively easy thing for the average pastor to secure the well-nigh united and cordial support of his entire officiary, and when this is done a great step has been taken toward ultimate success. Now and then a citizen of "Meroz" may be found even among the official brethren; but the hosts of God must not delay on that account. They may go forth to battle, sure of victory.

In one of the prominent churches of one of the largest Conferences in New York a comparatively young man found his place of labor. The church was wealthy, fashionable, influential socially, and altogether a very respectable and well-to-do people. They gave their pastor a delightful parsonage for his home, his salary was ample and promptly paid, and his vacation

was entirely satisfactory. It must, however, be said that religion was at a low ebb, class meetings almost unknown, and the midweek prayer meeting very poorly attended. It is undoubtedly true that there are some few pastors who under the circumstances would not have worried or laid awake nights in view of such conditions. But the pastor was not of this type. He found a great company of unconverted young people in the Sunday school, many young men and women connected with the families of his church members who seldom attended the preaching services. He also found some few of his members who occasionally attended the theater, were found in the dance hall, were known to play cards—some of them for prizes—and his heart was troubled. For weeks he studied the problem by night and day, prayed often and long in his hours of meditation and study, preached tenderly and faithfully. At last he called all his official brethren together, nearly thirty of them, and fully opened his heart to them. Then followed a season of protracted and earnest prayer, and then each official promised to stand by the pastor in any effort he might make to secure a revival of religion. It needs only to

be said that from this official meeting for consultation and prayer and consecration thirty men went forth to do the work of lay evangelists. In shop and store, in offices and by the wayside, these men with a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost went about telling the old, old story illustrated by their new experiences. The immediate result was the conversion of more than two hundred people, a larger proportion of them prominent men and women. The collateral results were the abandonment by all the backslidden church members of the theater, the card table, and the dance. The ultimate results God alone can know and estimate, but it is sure they are beyond finite measurement, and they will be as lasting as eternity. And this came about because the burdened heart, the anxious, loving heart of the pastor led him by the help of the Holy Spirit to plan his work wisely and carry it forward to glorious sucess.

Here is another instance of the same kind, and, as in the former case, this is a young man. There is no good reason why old men may not go and do likewise. It seems that the bishop who was to preside at his Conference sent out a request to the preachers and people of all the

charges to observe the fourth of October as a day of special prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the revival of the work of God. This young preacher made his plan to observe the day fully and faithfully. He was not a city preacher, but a modern circuit rider, and so he called all his people together at the central appointment, with the following results. This is what he has to say of what happened: "There were about a hundred people present all day from the four appointments on my charge. It was one of the most glorious days ever spent by me on the earth. Three were converted on that day. We continued on, and one hundred and sixty were converted at the one appointment. We have had revivals, and many conversions at all points on the charge. Have all our collections up to the apportionments." What a magnificent record! No outside help of any kind. Our young preacher had faith in God; waited before the mercy seat till he received the baptism of power; called his people around him, and they answered to his call, and the work went straight on in the power of God. Church members will follow such leadership, and glorious results will be secured. What this one

young preacher accomplished, what he did, may be done by thousands of young preachers. It costs thought, planning, toil, consecration, self-denial, holy living, mighty faith, but all these are within the reach of all. Why hesitate? Why halt when such glorious possibilities are within easy reach, when such immortal victories may be won?

Here is still another case in point. The preacher was not one of the highly exalted kind, but a good, straightforward man of God. He had more than sixty converts.

How he did it! How, within two months of the adjournment of Conference, did he gather more than sixty happy converts into his church? He went away from Conference finding fault with the presiding elders and bishop because he was not sent to a more inviting field! Not a bit of it. Well, then, he went away from Conference grumbling because nobody seemed to appreciate his ability, and he was just dropped down in a haphazard way! Not a bit of it. But certainly when he reached his new appointment he let all the people know that they had a man who was away above their style, and his high intellectual attainments entitled him to a much better place! Not a bit of

it. At all events, the pastor and his wife began as soon as possible to find fault with the parsonage, and fuss about the furniture; and they did this in a very public way! Not a bit of it. Well, but the pastor put all his wits to work to whitewash the garden fence, and putter around with a broom and hammer and handsaw to fix things up while he scolded about the carelessness of his predecessor! Not a bit of it.

Surely, if he did not do these things, what did he do? First of all, he thanked God that he was alive and able to go to his appointment —glad that he had a place anywhere to preach the glorious Gospel of the blessed God; glad that the Eternal God was his refuge, and that underneath him were the everlasting arms; glad that in his soul he had the precious witness of the Holy Ghost conjoined with the testimony of his own consciousness that he was a child of God. So he went to his work, light in his eye, a smile on his face, a warm hand grasp and cheering word for his people, whether rich or poor, whether clad in rags or in silks. Then the first Sunday instead of making a display he preached the Gospel; he went into the Sunday school. Then just as

soon as things were fairly settled in the parsonage he began to call from house to house, talking about Jesus and the great salvation, and praying with the families as occasion offered; and so in the class meetings and prayer meetings his presence was an inspiration, and of course the people rallied around him, and soon the first convert appeared, and then another and another, and as the number multiplied faith increased, and so the work went on, and it will go on. It always goes on with such preachers.

How he did it! Why, just as any fully consecrated, sweetly saved preacher may do it. The pathway to success is sure if we will walk in it, and the weakest may walk in it. This man planned and worked, and expected success. He did not wait. He wisely used appropriate means and achieved success.

CHAPTER V

Revival Persistency

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Revival Persistency

O ye of fearful hearts, be strong!
  Your downcast eyes and hands lift up!
Ye shall not be forgotten long;
  Hope to the end, in Jesus hope!
Tell him ye wait his grace to prove;
And cannot fail, if God is love.

—*Charles Wesley.*

Although the vine its fruit deny,
  Although the olive yield no oil,
The withering fig trees droop and die,
  The fields elude the tiller's toil,
The empty stall no herd afford,
  And perish all the bleating race,
Yet will I triumph in the Lord,—
  The God of my salvation praise.

—*Charles Wesley.*

And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it.—2 Kings, xiii, 18, 19.

And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.—Gal. vi, 9.

Revival persistency assumes that the preacher has common sense, and makes constant use of all he has in carrying forward the work of God. Good common sense leads the preacher to lay his plans with much thought and wisdom. At least he will be careful to take the choicest part of the year for his revival services, and insist that other things shall yield the right of way to the supreme work of the church. Then the preacher will try to know the people, and will study their peculiar ways, habits, and notions, and not try to compel abject submission to his opinions and dictates. Usually the most and best service can be secured when men who do the work have an idea that they are taken into kindly and confidential relations with the pastor in his planning for a revival campaign. Then, the pastor must not fret, or fume, or worry; for if he does he will find the church will partake of the same style, and will become utterly balky.

It will need but a moment's thought to see that the conditions just suggested are not spontaneous. They result from well-known and appreciable causes. Revival persistency first of all depends upon the personal religious experience of the pastor. Revivals have taken

place and souls have been converted under the labors of backslidden and wicked men; but even such men may preach the truth, and such truth has produced fruit. This will not in any degree militate against the idea that a wholly consecrated man, filled with the Spirit and living a holy life, is a more suitable agent through whom the unsaved may be brought to Christ. With such an experience let the pastor go about his work as the hand of Providence shall point out the way. The people must be visited, and direct personal effort must be employed. If the people are well call on them, if they are sick call on them all the more, and this work should be done in a systematic and thorough manner, and it will be so done by every faithful pastor. Let him persist; the people will be well after a while, and then circumstances will be favorable. It may be that some members of the official board are not in full sympathy with the movement; they are frozen Christians. Let the preacher persist; the sun will melt mountains of ice, if it has time and opportunity. It may be that a sudden quarrel arises in the choir, and harps by the dozen are hung upon the willows, and the singers will not come up to the help of

the Lord. Very well. "Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God;" but be it known that a genuine revival is not made up of singing. Let the preacher persist, singing or no singing. It may be that various distractions altogether unexpected and not in any way helpful may arise, and there is the danger that the attention of the people may be diverted. Never mind; the preacher has steady faith, and steady faith means steady salvation. Let the preacher persist, and the work will go on; for "it is not by might nor by power" that revival services are to be sustained, but by the outpouring of the Spirit upon saints and sinners; and this grace comes in answer to real, believing prayer which goes up to the throne from consecrated and baptized souls.

Revival persistency! That does not necessarily mean that ten or a dozen services should be held weekly for six months without interruption; but it does mean that when once wisely planned revival services have been commenced they should be steadily continued until crowned with victory, or a clear providential indication points to their termination.

CHAPTER VI

Evangelistic Preaching

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Evangelistic Preaching

Shall I, for fear of feeble man,
The Spirit's course in me restrain?
Or, undismayed in deed and word,
Be a true witness of my Lord?

Awed by a mortal's frown, shall I
Conceal the word of God most high?
How then before thee shall I dare
To stand, or how thine anger bear?

Shall I, to soothe the unholy throng,
Soften thy truth, or smooth my tongue,
To gain earth's gilded toys, or flee
The cross endured, my Lord, by thee?

Trans. by John Wesley.

Arise, go into Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.—Jonah iii, 2.

Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.—Ezek. iii, 17.

Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.—Mark xvi, 15, 16.

To evangelize is "to instruct in the Gospel; to preach the Gospel; to convert to a belief in the Gospel." All this may be done by pen, or word of mouth, or by a holy life. In La

Rochelle, which for many years was a stronghold of the Huguenots, there is an ancient cathedral whose aisles were once trodden by the bravest men and saintliest women. As one enters he may see at the right a magnificent window, in which are the figures of an apostle, life-size, and an angel. The angel has in his left hand a long trumpet, and in his right hand an open book. On the left-hand page is written, *"Tuba mirum spargens sonum;"* and on the opposite page is written, *"Liber scriptus proferetur."* The interpretation is manifest. The written book, the Bible, which reveals the will of God and makes known the plan of redemption and salvation, shall be published; but it is the Gospel trumpet that scatters the joyful news, the wonderful news, the glad sound, far and wide over all the earth. The evangelist must be more than a writer, more than a teacher, more than a book; he must be the living incarnation of Gospel truth, and he must translate his life into words aflame with love and compel the attention of toiling, suffering, dying, despairing men and women, until they shall come out of the regions of the shadow of death into the light and liberty of the sons and daughters of God.

Every minister of the Lord Jesus Christ in spirit and purpose should be an evangelist. The Master was an evangelist. The supreme evidence of his divinity was, not that he gave sight to the blind, strength and soundness to the lame, cleansing to the lepers, hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead, but that he preached the Gospel to the poor—that he evangelized. In truth, he was a restless, itinerant evangelist; for he went about all Galilee, "teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom," and, incidentally, "healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." Almost at the instant when he was taken up from the earth and a cloud received him out of the sight of his astonished followers, he said, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations;" "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature;" "And ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." These words of the risen Christ ought to inspire every loyal heart with an all-consuming desire to spread abroad the knowledge of the truth and win this world back to its rightful allegiance. When these words take

possession of the soul, then we know what Paul, the great evangelist to the nations, meant when he said, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:....that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made comfortable unto his death." Hence, if we study the example and commands of the Lord Jesus, if we study the thought and spirit of Paul, we must be impressed with the idea that, so long as there are careless souls to be aroused, penitents to be confronted, and saints to be instructed and encouraged, there will be needed a ministry that is thoroughly evangelistic.

The conditions of every age are peculiar. The first century of the Christian era had scarcely anything in common with the opening of the twentieth century. Then there was but one nation. Rome was everything. Rome claimed dominion from the Hebrides to the Sahara, from the pillars of Hercules to the banks of the Indus. The empire was magnificent, irresistible, and supposed to be eternal. Christians were few in numbers, humble in rank, powerless in politics, despised by the

learned, persecuted by tyrants, and scattered here and there uncertain of the future. To-day the nominal Christians of the world number half a billion—a third of its entire population. Christian nations control all things by sea and land. There is no *terra incognita.* Even Africa has been explored and is being rapidly apportioned among the Christian nations of Europe. Men fly from country to country as on the wings of the wind, and they send their thoughts around the world with a speed that well-nigh outstrips the light. Everybody in Christendom may know every morning at the breakfast table, or every evening at the supper table, most of the principal events that have taken place in the preceding twenty-four hours in all the lands between the frozen circles of the North and the South. We are neighbors by propinquity to everybody. There are no hermit nations; there are no somnolent peoples. The rush of events has awakened the whole mass of humanity. If there are comparatively few great and all-embracing scholars there are uncounted millions who know more or less about men and things, about the past and present, about matters with which they ought to be familiar, and equally about

those they would do well to ignore and forget forever. Nor can there be any doubt in regard to the perils surrounding the Christian faith. There is no longer persecution that involves the loss of liberty, possessions, or life. We have freedom almost everywhere to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences. But none the less are there manifest efforts to undermine the foundations upon which Christianity has been built; a persistent, malicious determination in every way to set aside the authority of the Bible; a specious or virulent antagonism to the claims of the Lord Jesus; a calm, quiet, invulnerable indifference; and an intense devotion and slavery to fame, fashion, wealth, pleasure, and all worldliness and sin. To compare the conditions of 1900 and those of the year 100, in not a few respects it will appear that the opposing forces, the enemies of Christianity, are as formidable now as then.

There is one fundamental fact we must always remember. Humanity itself, in all essentials, is always the same. This is true of all the races now living. It always has been true, and always will be true. The ideas of ought not and ought, of sin and penalty, of God and

responsibility, are thoroughly ingrained in the nature of man. They are found in all lands; they cannot be obliterated. It is equally true that souls everywhere desire and long to be delivered from the burden—may we not say from the guilt, the pollution, and the power?—of sin. Human souls are not orphaned, they are not outcast, they are not forgotten. God has them in mind, and his love flows out to all, and he will surely be found by those who feel after him. Human hearts are hungry for pity, compassion, sympathy, love. This hunger is just as natural and just as universal as the hunger of the body; and is it not reasonable to suppose that some provision should be made to satisfy this heart-hunger? The very existence of hunger proves that somewhere there must be an adequate supply of what is needed to appease the inevitable longings of the deathless spirit. The one sufficient, supreme, divine remedy for all ills, whether of individuals or of humanity, is the Gospel of the Son of God, for it is the infinite, omnipotent, all-efficient power of God, the eternal and ever-blessed heavenly Father whose name is Love, unto salvation—salvation of soul and body, for time and eternity—to everyone, of every race and

nation, that believeth. The remedy is brought within the reach of everyone, and it may be obtained upon conditions that may easily be complied with by all.

We need to remember always that the Gospel is complex and comprehensive. There is much more to it than is embraced in that puerile proverb, "Be good and you will be happy." When it is assumed that such a proverb covers the case we relegate the Gospel to the low standard of Confucius and Mencius. There must be the foundation of good conduct in the intelligent apprehension of truth; and so the Gospel implies the search for truth. The Gospel has its greatest triumphs in such intellects as those of Paul and Newton and Wesley. The Lord recognized the use of the intellect when he said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." And the use of the intellect in the consideration of the Gospel is commended in that memorable passage where it is said, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." But the Gospel requires faith and belief,

because there are depths and heights of divine wisdom that can never be fully grasped by the human understanding, and because human reason may not be able to perfectly adjust all the relations of revealed truth. "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

CHAPTER VII

Doctrinal Preaching

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Doctrinal Preaching

We all believe in one true God,
  Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Strong Deliverer in our need,
  Praised by all the heavenly host,
By whose mighty power alone
All is made, and wrought, and done.

And we believe in Jesus Christ,
  Son of man and Son of God;
Who, to raise us up to heaven,
  Left his throne and bore our load;
By whose cross and death are we
Rescued from our misery.

And we confess the Holy Ghost,
  Who from both forever flows;
Who upholds and comforts us
  In the midst of fears and woes.
Blest and holy Trinity,
Praise shall aye be brought to thee!

Trans. by Miss C. Winkworth.

For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.—Isa. xxviii, 10.

Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.—1 Tim. iv, 13.

Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught,

that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.—Titus i, 9.

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.—1 Tim. vi, 3-5.

In these days much is said in regard to creeds, as though they were of the least possible importance. There are some so-called Christian ministers who evidently think, with the unbelieving poet, that a man's creed must be right who lives a respectable and decent life, forgetting the restraining power that men of right creeds have on all about them. The Gospel is a creed—an imperative, intolerant, God-ordained creed. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." These are the words of Jesus, and they imply the existence of a creed —of something to be believed. Men with no moral convictions are the men without creeds. Men who excuse sin and make it a trivial thing in the moral universe are the men without creeds. Men who think God is careless, indif-

ferent, oblivious in regard to the violations of the divine law are the men without creeds. Men who make myths of heaven and hell, of the resurrection and the judgment, are the men without creeds. The men who, while they maintain the appearance of respectability and good conduct, are yet worldly, self-indulgent, pleasure-seeking, and selfish, are the men without creeds. Genuine Christian character independent of the Christian creed is well-nigh impossible. Jesus was a creed-maker. Hear him: "Ye believe in God"—the God of the Scriptures, the omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, the eternally self-existing God. "Ye believe in God"—the lawmaker and administrator of the material and moral realms, the watchful, faithful, loving friend of all men. This faith in God is the first article of this creed. And the second is like unto it: "Believe also in me." Believe in me as the Messiah, whose coming has been foretold from Genesis to Malachi; in me, of whom Moses and the Psalms and the prophets all testify; in me, the only begotten Son of God, the I Am of the Old Testament, equal with the Father, self-existent from all eternity, the Redeemer and Saviour of mankind. The

Lord Jesus had no idea of character without creed, and it would seem that there must be something wrong with a man's head or heart who inveighs against creeds.

What this present hour needs is that God's people "should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Furthermore, as John Wesley says, "we are to contend earnestly, yet humbly, meekly, and lovingly, for the faith, for all fundamental truths, once delivered by God, to remain unvaried forever." This is no time for laxity and latitudinarianism. The imperative duty of this eventful hour is to refuse to waver "like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end," "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more chil-

dren, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." These, and such as these, are men with creeds, and they are the men to stand up against the tide of irreligion, unbelief, and carelessness of God and his truth that wrathfully or insidiously would undermine the bulwarks of our faith and hope. A ministry that is really and truly evangelistic will stand upon this ground, and under all circumstances will proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus. Such a ministry will not spend its time in apologizing for the truth or in simply defending the truth; but, rather, it will stand out boldly, take the aggressive, and be ready always "with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word." There can be no possible substitutes for such methods and for such a ministry. The more pronounced, definite, evangelical, experimentally practical, and biblical are the views of the minister, the more evangelistic will he be and the better adapted to all the exigencies of these extraordinary times.

We must not lose sight of the great truth that the Gospel, while it involves the use of the

intellect, even the highest powers of the greatest intellect, and while it requires a definite creed based on the word of God, also takes cognizance of the affectional nature of man. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The ideal of some people with superficial culture and timid natures is that a Christian should be a bit of ice—clear ice, it may be, but devoid of emotions. They have not the remotest appreciation of the experiences of Jesus and John and Paul, or of the unnumbered millions of holy souls that have ached and throbbed and agonized for sinners in danger of eternal doom, and have exulted and sung and shouted over victories won. To live without emotion, to suppress all manifestations of love and joy, to be good without a creed, to be a proper, impossible thing instead of a sympathetic soul, to be a polished marble statue instead of a living man, seems to be the height of possible attainment. These are the people who would have driven the Syrophenician woman away from Christ; who would have sent the man home from his neighbor's house without bread; who would have stood by the grave of Lazarus with never a sigh heaving the

breast, or a quiver on the lip, or a tear brimming the eyes. These are the people who would not have rejoiced with the woman who found her lost money, or with the man who found his wandering sheep, or with the father of the prodigal when his poor, wayward, sinning boy came home. Thank God, the Gospel is complex and comprehensive, meets the wants of all men, and appeals to all the powers, capabilities, and faculties of our natures. It is not a poor, one-sided, unsymmetrical, deformed thing, like a post in the ground to which young twigs are tied to keep them straight; it is an inspiration, an influence, an energy, an attraction, a divine manifestation of truth, pity, compassion, love, combined with omniscient power for the uplift of the soul and the salvation of the race.

CHAPTER VIII

Blind Leaders of the Blind

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Blind Leaders of the Blind

God moves in a mysterious way
  His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
  And rides upon the storm.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
  And scan his work in vain:
God is his own interpreter,
  And he will make it plain.

—*William Cowper.*

Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord.—Lev. xix, 14.

Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way: and all the people shall say, Amen.—Deut. xxvii, 18.

Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?—Luke vi, 39.

The fact that the Gospel is such as has now been indicated does not imply that all clergymen are evangelistic, or that all the clergymen of any one denomination are evangelistic. We need not search closely in order to find those who are ranked as Christian ministers who

have very little sympathy with the evangelistic spirit. There are quite a few, taking all clergymen into account, who make but little use of the Gospel in their ministrations. They know Shakespeare better than they know the Bible; they are more familiar with the heathen poets than with the Psalms; they are more earnest readers of the novels of the day than of the epistles of Paul. They pride themselves on their scholarly attainments, and are never so well pleased as when they are recognized as belonging to the literary class. Their sermons are essays; their themes are poetical, fanciful, impractical. The people listen, and if they receive any impression it will be expressed by "How beautiful! how soothing!" These preachers have little use for the Ten Commandments or the Lord's Sermon on the Mount; and the ethics of the Bible is too exacting and severe to command their attention or challenge an honest effort to fulfill its requirements. Such preachers are blind leaders of the blind, if, indeed, they have enough of plan or purpose to lead anybody. Duty, conscience, retribution, eternity, cross-bearing, Christ-following are all ignored. If the intellect is gently agitated, if the æsthetic nature is slightly

stimulated, if an indefinite hope of future good and eternal well-being is faintly produced, it is about all that is anticipated or expected. It would be well for the Church and the world if such preachers, when they pass off the stage of action or inaction, might leave no successors. They are cumberers of the ground—barren fig trees. They are not evangelistic, and they have no desire to be. If Christianity had to depend upon them for continuance and vitality it would practically die out in the course of two or three generations. We need a ministry of the heart, as well as of the head, a ministry that will appeal to all the God-given faculties of the emotional nature, and so win men to that service which is perfect freedom and to that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. The human heart is a harp of a thousand strings, and we need a ministry that can sweep with loving touch all chords and stir the whole being. An evangelistic ministry, warm-hearted, full-souled, loving, brotherly, can do this; and no other can. Such a ministry was never more needed than now.

Then we have a class of ministers who never forget the mint, anise, and cumin, like those of whom we read in the New Testament who,

laying aside the commandments of God, gave themselves with all diligence to the frequent washing of their hands and of pots and cups and tables and brazen vessels. They are taken up with rites and ceremonies, and think more of posture and dress, of bookstands and altars, of robes and mantles, of candles and crucifixes, of censers and incense, of ordinations and historic fables, of rituals and church authority, than they do of the great and eternal truths of God's word and a holy life. The letter that killeth is everything to them, while the spirit that giveth life is well-nigh forgotten or buried without the hope of resurrection. It is sad but true, as the history of the ages proves, that a ritualistic ministry is not qualified to represent a living Christ or to do the work which a waiting world so sadly needs. There is absolutely no force, no power for good, in such as these; they cannot reclaim this world and bring it back to God. Under their leadership the Church will drift away from Christ and will become frivolous, worldly, formal, dead, until at last Christ will say: "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works;

or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

Besides these two classes of ministers just mentioned we have a third. They are not found in large numbers in the evangelical Churches, though here and there one may be found; they abound in the so-called liberal Churches; they are in this country and England and on the Continent. It would be somewhat difficult to mention a name that would exactly describe them. They commonly assume to be "advanced thinkers," "progressive theologians," "higher critics," "profound scholars," "abreast-of-the-age, up-to-date investigators of all knowledge." They are really flavored with Renan, Strauss, Baur, Wellhausen, with a lingering trace of Astruc, Voltaire, Paine, and Spinoza. They know better than all the Jews, and all the evangelical historical students of all ages, who wrote the Pentateuch and Joshua and the Psalms and Isaiah and Daniel. They are very largely given to evolving their knowledge from their own inner consciousness. They seem to lack sincerity, modesty, honesty, and candor. When they finish their work on the Holy Scriptures there is little

left but a wreck. They eliminate prophecies, especially those concerning Christ; they throw out everything that is supernatural; they make the authors of some of the most wonderful and magnificent portions of the Old Testament to be unknown, unnamed, and unheard-of men, who lived a thousand years after Moses and are supposed to have been among the exiles of Babylon. The work done by these destructive, rationalistic, arrogant critics would be bad enough if confined to the Old Testament; but, if possible, the destruction they make of the New is still worse. They degrade Christ; they will not tolerate the idea of miracles; they seem to have a virulent hatred of what is spiritual and supernatural. Whatever these people may call themselves, whatever in their pride of scholarship and opinion they may assume to be, there is one name they ought to be compelled to wear. They are destructive rationalists. They exalt human reason to a dizzy height, and then bow before its dictates. Unbroken, unimpeached history, that goes back for thousands of years, has no weight with them. They make a Babel of their discussions, for no two of them agree; they have added but little, if any, additional light of research and

scholarship to that already in possession of evangelical, historical, theological students. They are destructive to the last degree, for the natural and logical outcome of their teachings must be the loss of all faith in the Bible as the word of God. Good men may be deluded by these destructives and still hold on to their goodness; converted men to some extent may be drawn away by the babblings of these destructives and yet hold on to their hope in Christ; but the inevitable tendency of this destructive rationalism is toward deism and atheism. It is a cause of unspeakable regret that any man holding these views should be tolerated in any evangelical pulpit or school of theology, for the ultimate outcome will be as baleful as the exhalations of the deadly upas tree.

CHAPTER IX

Ambassadors from Heaven's Court

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Ambassadors from Heaven's Court

Go forth, ye heralds, in My name,
  Sweetly the Gospel trumpet sound;
The glorious jubilee proclaim,
  Where'er the human race is found.

The joyful news to all impart,
  And teach them where salvation lies;
With care bind up the broken heart,
  And wipe the tears from weeping eyes.

—*John Logan.*

For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.—Mal. ii, 7.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.—Luke iv, 18, 19.

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.—2 Cor. v, 20.

In contrast to certain classes of so-called clergymen, or ministers, it affords supreme satisfaction to know that we have an evangelical and evangelistic ministry. They are

not all found in any one Church. They are in every Church where the name of Jesus is held in reverence as that of the second person in the adorable Trinity, where he is loved and worshiped, where he is known as the all-atoning Lamb of God. This evangelistic ministry does not despise, much less ignore, sound learning or the thorough cultivation of the intellect; for it believes that, other things being equal, the man with the best brain and most carefully and wisely trained is the best evangelist. Nor does it undervalue, much less pour contempt on, creeds. It holds to the Bible, first, last, and always, as the source of all truth essential to salvation; but at the same time it claims a part in the heritage of the ages and takes the Apostles' Creed as a wise and helpful formulation of doctrine. It has a hope, and is ready and able to declare the reason for it. It believes, and therefore it speaks. Its faith is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It believes the whole eleventh chapter of Hebrews. It believes in the inspiration and authority of all the Scriptures. It believes in the supernatural, in miracles, in the absolute divinity of Jesus, in his atonement, resurrection, and ascension

to the right hand of God. It believes in the resurrection, in the judgment, in immortality, in heaven and hell. It believes that every penitent soul may come to God in the name of Jesus Christ and find pardon, life, and salvation. It believes that the time is coming when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the water covers the sea;" and in this faith it expects the Gospel to spread abroad until the last son of Adam shall hear the joyful sound.

If ever there was a time when such a ministry, with such a faith, was needed it is now. Christ has told us that the time is coming when "there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." No mightier problems ever confronted Christianity than at this hour. What are we to do with labor and capital? What with the corruptions of society? What with the venality of statesmen and legislators? What with the worship of wealth and power? What with the wronged and oppressed in this

land and all lands? What with the vast masses of the illiterate of Christendom? What with the hordes of tramps and the vile, dangerous classes? What with the poor of the great cities? What with the waste of naval and military armament? What with the awful drink habit and the fearfully malignant and curseful drink traffic? What with the unconverted, unenlightened, unevangelized thousand millions of heathenism?

Surely such a condition of affairs as is revealed by these questions may well appall the stoutest heart and try the stanchest faith. The supreme hope of the world is in a genuine, cultured, believing, rejoicing, evangelistic ministry. Such a ministry can answer questions and resolve doubts; can state, explain, defend the truths of the Gospel when formulated into creeds; can exemplify the blessed, joyous, conscious experience of a personal salvation. This world is not to be won to Christ *en masse*. From this time on it is to be hand-to-hand work. The ministry is the divinely appointed leadership of the people. If the ministry is evangelistic the people will be the same. And when the Church and ministry are both evangelistic all barriers to the progress of the cause of Christ will be

removed, the great and pressing questions that demand attention will be solved, the Gospel message will be carried to all lands, and the morning of the millennium will be hastened in its coming. Why may it not become the all-absorbing desire of every minister to enter with all his soul upon evangelistic work, which includes the enlightenment and conversion of sinners and the building up of all converts in the truth of the Gospel? In order to this there must be entire consecration of all that is ever called "my" or "mine;" a devotement of all powers to the service of the Master; a seeking for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, for purity, inspiration, and service, until the gift is bestowed; a holy, blameless life; and ceaseless toil for the salvation of the souls of men. That God may give the Churches and the world an evangelistic ministry ought to be the ceaseless prayer of every loyal Christian heart.

CHAPTER X

Special Helps in Revivals

CHAPTER X

Special Helps in Revivals

Go, labor on; spend and be spent,
  Thy joy to do the Father's will;
It is the way the Master went;
  Should not the servant tread it still?

Toil on, and in thy toil rejoice;
  For toil comes rest, for exile home;
Soon shalt thou hear the Bridegroom's voice,
  The midnight peal, "Behold, I come!"

—*H. Bonar.*

Has thy night been long and mournful?
  Have thy friends unfaithful proved?
Have thy foes been proud and scornful,
  By thy sighs and tears unmoved?
    Cease thy mourning;
  Zion still is well beloved.

God, thy God, will now restore thee;
  He himself appears thy Friend;
All thy foes shall flee before thee;
  Here their boasts and triumphs end:
    Great deliverance
  Zion's King will surely send.

—*Thomas Kelly.*

But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden.—Gal. vi, 4, 5.

At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. . . . Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear.—2 Tim. iv, 16, 17.

The pastor who depends on special helps in revivals makes a great mistake. It results unfavorably both for pastor and people. It is a great drawback to a pastor's influence and usefulness if the churches come to understand that he cannot have a revival without special helps. The churches come to look on such a man as a one-sided, incomplete pastor, as one incompetent to make full proof of his ministry. As soon as the churches take this view of a man they lose to a very large degree their confidence in him, and by his own methods he has depreciated his own value and raised an almost insurmountable barrier to his own success. The man in whom the churches have faith and are willing to follow, and gladly and thoroughly sustain in every way, is the man who can do his own preaching, care for his prayer meetings, look after his own Epworth League, direct and watch over his own Sunday school, be in his own class meetings, take charge of his own altar services, do his own pastoral

visiting, carefully and systematically train his own probationers, and make his own church and community the one center of all his thought and toil. This kind of a man, if he have a fair amount of common sense, and sweetness of disposition, and tact, and ability to manage men, and a love for the perishing, and enjoys religion, and has faith in the promises of God, will surely and naturally develop the supreme quality of leadership; he will command the cooperation of his church and people, and he will see the work of God prosper in his hands. He will not need to depend on special helps for revival work, for with God's blessing he and his church will come to enjoy a perennial revival.

And who will venture to say that this is an impossible ideal—that there are no such pastors? If there are not plenty of them it is not for lack of natural endowments, not for lack of unattainable grace; it is simply and solely because the pastor does not have the right ideal before his mind, and is not willing with unreserved consecration to give himself wholly to the work of God; and because he will not take this reasonable ideal and day and night strive to realize it in his own life and ministry. There

are so many—too many by far—who fall into ruts and in an easy-going way perform in a routine and perfunctory style the ordinary duties of the profession. Such men are not wanted by the churches, they are of little profit to them; but they are the men who, if they have any revivals, must depend upon special and outside helps to secure them.

But bad as it is for the pastor to depend upon these special helps, it is far worse for the church. It is difficult to imagine anything that can more thoroughly weaken the faith, quench the zeal, and destroy the activity of a church than to have the members depend upon special help to carry on revival work. If this is understood by any church to be the accepted policy, then, first of all, the average church member will fold his arms and wait for the usual excitement, and for the angel to come along from somewhere, perhaps from heaven, to trouble the waters. Church members who depend on these special helps, as a rule, are very nearly good for nothing for regular work. Besides, they lose to a very large degree their sense of personal responsibility; and when that is the case with a Christian man or woman, then little in the way of service is attempted and

less is accomplished. It is so easy to wait for the coming of special help, and so easy to excuse one's self when it is known that somebody else will in due time be hired to do the work. It is death to any church to lose the sense of direct personal responsibility. God will tolerate few of the excuses that may be offered. No one can shift to another the responsibility that properly and rightly belongs to himself. All Christendom, and our Methodism with all the rest, suffers because of shirking personal responsibility. And what better calculated to foster and encourage this than dependence upon special helps to do the work each should himself do?

And, still further, such church members suffer a spiritual atrophy in all their faculties and senses. Their hearts become ossified; their eyes are dim to see the needs of a sinning, sorrowing, dying world; their feet are lame and they cannot run without great weariness; their hands are hard and stiff and unsympathetic; there is no thrill of Christian helpfulness about them. O, for hearts that feel, for eyes that see, for feet that run, for hands that are gentle, tender, and full of help! But there will be need of much and constant exercise to possess all

this. Church members who wait for special helps in revivals will not possess these world-uplifting, soul-saving qualities. O, that God would save our churches from waiting for special helps in revivals!

And yet I must not be misunderstood. I would not say a word against any evangelist called of God to the work; I would not put a straw in the way of any such man or woman. But what I do plead for is that every pastor and every church should constantly be engaged in evangelistic work, and not depend upon special outside helps. If all our pastors and churches would just now throw themselves into this glorious work holy fire would descend in pentecostal glory, and revivals would break out in all directions.

CHATPER XI

Pastoral Visitation

CHAPTER XI

Pastoral Visitation.

Sow in the morn thy seed;
  At eve hold not thy hand;
To doubt and fear give thou no heed,
  Broadcast it o'er the land.

Thou canst not toil in vain:
  Cold, heat, and moist, and dry,
Shall foster and mature the grain
  For garners in the sky.

—*James Montgomery.*

Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, . . . and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears.—Acts xx, 18, 20, 21, 31.

Revivals that are permanent in their results involve much house-to-house visiting. A revival without this will usually add but very little to the real strength of the church. It is not an

easy thing to do the pastoral work of an ordinary church. It cannot be done as it should be unless the pastor is thoroughly conscientious. There are two things every preacher ought to do thoroughly, honestly, and as in the sight of God. The first of these is his pulpit preparation. The second is his pastoral work. It is to be feared that some preachers have but small concern for either of these things. The inevitable result is that after a few fruitless and unhappy years in the ministry they fall out by the way, and life is a sad disappointment and failure, and this when the outcome might well have been altogether different. Assuming that the preparation for the pulpit is never neglected, then how important it always is to supplement this with faithful pastoral visitation. In the systematic and faithful discharge of this duty the pastor will come in contact with his people, and in proportion as he knows their home life, as he comes to know the heart burdens, cares, sorrows, and trials of his people, can he do them real good, and be of service to them in all their times of need. In this personal intercourse abundant opportunities will present themselves to cheer and assist in many ways the toiling, struggling saints of God, and at

the same time come very near the hearts of sinners and win them for Christ.

If a pastor is anxious that every month, not to say every week, should witness the conversion of sinners, if he has a ceaseless, yearning, unspeakable desire that within the walls of his house of worship there should constantly be heard the cry of penitent souls, and the songs and shouts of the saved, the way to secure these results is for him to follow the example of Paul, and preach Jesus from house to house, and with tears and prayers and loving entreaty persuade precious souls to accept Christ.

The surest way to win souls to Christ is to take them one by one and by direct personal effort show them their peril, their duty, their privilege, and urge them to forsake their sins and accept Christ by faith and unite with God's people. To visit from house to house needs both care and preparation. It is an easy thing to run about among the people with no definite purpose except to perform a professional duty in a formal and perfunctory way; it is quite different to seriously and soberly go from house to house, with the express purpose of warning and entreating the people to forsake their sins and turn to God. Gay, giddy, jolly,

gossiping pastors will never succeed in this work, and it is equally sure that they will never be able to answer at the judgment seat for the souls committed to their charge. If all our preachers would, in the fear of God, and in the faithful performance of their vows, enter upon this all-important work of house-to-house visitation, and continue it through the year, it would result in the most wonderful and widespread revivals of religion.

All this is within the possibilities of every preacher. Faithful preaching conjoined with suitable pastoral visitation means the revival spirit, and power, and fruits abiding through all the twelve months of every year. Why will not every pastor use these divinely appointed means and know the joy of a perpetual harvest?

Brothers, why not even now, while reading these lines, renew your vows, and seeking a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost commence the faithful discharge of one of the most important of all the duties that can devolve upon a pastor? Brothers, time is short, and what we do to win souls to Christ must be done right speedily. Brothers, are we ready to stand before the great white throne?

CHAPTER XII

Feeding the Flock

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CHAPTER XII

Feeding the Flock

My gracious Master and my God,
  Assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad,
  The honors of thy name.
—*Charles Wesley.*

His only righteousness I show,
  His saving truth proclaim:
'Tis all my business here below,
  To cry, "Behold the Lamb!"

Happy, if with my latest breath
  I may but gasp his name;
Preach him to all, and cry in death,
  "Behold, behold the Lamb!"
—*Charles Wesley.*

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.—2 Tim. iv, 2-5.

The great work of the preacher is to build up believers and lead sinners to the Saviour.

The vows we take upon ourselves when we are ordained, and when we enter the Conference, are of the most solemn and binding character. It is a great misfortune if we are even tempted to think lightly of them. It is disastrous to come to a state of mind when we disregard them. These vows are intended to shut us off from and out of all worldly occupations and pursuits. They shut us up to purely ministerial work. They put upon us the most imperative obligations to walk in the love and fear of God. They hold us steadily to the sincerest and most earnest efforts to attain in all our religious experience the fullness of the grace of God. They require us to devote all our energies, activities, thoughts, time, and strength to the two great enterprises of the accredited ambassador of the court of heaven.

We may concede, without any attempt at apology or explanation, that when the utmost has been done that can be done by the most devoted and faithful pastor there will be left in every church a residuum of worldly, careless, backslidden members. They are alike indifferent to the persuasions of love and the denunciations of wrath which we find on many a page of God's holy book. They are joined to

their idols, and the heart of God yearns over them as over Ephraim of old, and would not give them up; yet it is feared that many of these will die with their names upon the church records and at last wake up to find themselves shut out of heaven.

This condition of affairs should not dishearten the faithful preacher, nor should he allow himself to be tempted by the enemy of all souls to desist from all efforts to win sinners until all the church members are just right. The arch enemy of all righteousness is never better pleased than when he succeeds in making a pious and sincere preacher believe that no ingathering of converts can be realized until the last church member comes up to an ideal standard fixed in the preacher's mind. Many a rich promise of revival has come to naught because of Satan's success with some conscientious pastor just at this very point. And yet the pastor must not cease to lead the flock by all loving persuasion and strong presentation of duty into the green pastures and beside the still waters. The Bible does not present an impossible standard, and the preacher must hold to that standard.

There are three ways in which the pastor

can succeed in his efforts to build up the church. The first and all-important source of influence is a holy life revealed in all the words and actions of the man of God. The church has a right to expect this of any man who assumes to stand in the sacred desk to proclaim the Gospel. His power to stimulate and help others will depend very much upon the good opinion of those who sit under his ministry. If he does not manifest the spirit of Christ, if he is not Christian in all his life and conversation, if he does not command his own words and temper, if he is not patient, gentle, long-suffering, easy to be entreated—if, in short, he has not the fruits of the Spirit, he will fail in leading others to that full experience of salvation which every believer should earnestly seek for and believingly expect. A holy life is more potent to persuade than the most ornate and eloquent sermons. One foolish word, one petulant action, one irreverent look, may utterly destroy the effects of the most masterful sermon. The preacher needs to pray:

"Arm me with jealous care,
As in thy sight to live;
And O, thy servant, Lord, prepare,
A strict account to give."

With a holy life the preacher needs to combine deep sympathy for all the young and weak and fearful members of his church. We cannot help people very much unless we can weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. Combined with this manifestation of sympathy there must be wisely directed efforts to render suitable and timely aid, and this will require the utmost diligence, activity, and perseverance. The idle, careless, ease-loving, pleasure-seeking pastor will fail from the very start. His mind is not on his business, and so the Master's business is left undone, and the sheep go astray, and the poor hireling shepherd, seeing the wolf coming, fleeth because he is a hireling. "The Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." And surely there is a very important sense in which every real pastor is like the Good Shepherd, for he gives all he has of time and strength and skill to care for the flock committed to his charge.

But any pastor who would build up the church in holiness must preach the word. He must persuade, convince, rebuke, reprove, exhort, and with loving tears and ceaseless prayers and pleadings he must show the right way, and in the sweet, blessed Gospel way com-

pel men to walk in it. What the pulipts of our Church need is an all-round ministry, strong, fearless, scholarly, earnest, enthusiastic, fully, gloriously saved. We ought to have in our pulpits more strength, more variety, more depth, more practicality, more Gospel, a wider scope and range of Gospel themes, and all set on fire with the love of Christ and the mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost. We do not want sensationalism, nor cranky themes announced in the daily press, nor weak attempts to discuss science, nor foolish attacks on poor, blatant infidels and atheists, nor platitudinous investigations of abstruse subjects of metaphysics, philosophy, and dogmatics, nor pitched battles with the noisy coteries or individuals who make themselves notorious while hoping to become famous in setting up some old-time heresy as though it was entirely new and wonderful. No, no, no! The people of good sense who are in our churches do not want any of this foolishness in the pulpit, for they know right well that in such things there is no real spiritual pabulum; they know that on such stuff they will famish and die. The cry of our people is more and more for the pure, plain Gospel vitalized in the heart and brain of a

man of God who lives under the shadow of the cross, and whose lips are touched with living coals from off the heavenly altars, and whose soul has felt, and continually feels, the divine afflatus of the Holy Ghost.

These essentials which the preacher must have in order to build up the church in the most holy faith are those precisely which are required to lead sinners to the Saviour. O, this wandering, dying, perishing world! O, these crowded ways which lead down to death and hell! O, the awful, dreadful eternity which waits on immortal souls who meet us every day! Would that God in his infinite mercy might help us to love them more, and bear them in our hearts, and labor for them lest suddenly they elude our efforts and die impenitent and unsaved!

CHAPTER XIII

Looking Out for Strangers

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Looking Out for Strangers

Saviour of men, thy searching eye
Doth all mine inmost thoughts descry;
Doth aught on earth my wishes raise,
Or the world's pleasures, or its praise?

The love of Christ doth me constrain
To seek the wandering souls of men;
With cries, entreaties, tears, to save,—
To snatch them from the gaping grave.
—*Trans. by John Wesley.*

Shepherd of souls, with pitying eye
The thousands of our Israel see;
To thee in their behalf we cry,
Ourselves but newly found in thee.

See where o'er desert wastes they err,
And neither food nor feeder have,
Nor fold, nor place of refuge near,
For no man cares their souls to save.
—*Charles Wesley.*

I was a stranger, and ye took me in.—Matt. xxv, 35.
Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.—Heb. xiii, 2.

Neglect of this duty is well-nigh universal in our churches. What is everybody's business is nobody's business, and as this duty is

common to all it is neglected by all. This growing habit—and a very bad habit it is—of going into church or coming out of church with no effort to notice the strangers within the gates is one to be most earnestly condemned. Men shake hands and speak with men they see every day in the week, and women speak to women the very same; but the casual visitor, the newcomer, is overlooked, if not ignored. Here is a case that was probably repeated in a thousand churches the very last Sunday: A well-dressed woman and two fine, first-class young men went to the morning service of one of our largest and most popular churches. After some time spent in waiting for the usher they were shown into a good pew, the sixth from the pulpit; in fact, as good a pew as there was in the church was placed at their entire disposal. At the close of the service they slowly and quietly left the pew, entered the aisle, and walked unmolested the whole length of the aisle, out into the vestibule, lingered for a little by the outer door, and then took their departure for their home, and from first to last no one had reached out to them the friendly hand, or said "Good morning," or "We are glad to see you here, and will be glad to see you again."

The only word spoken to them was "Seats?" by the usher, and when his question was answered with "If you please" the whole sociability of the occasion was exhausted, and the visiting trio escaped to the sunshine of the street, feeling a great relief from the utter formality and coldness of the worshiping congregation where they had attended service. The most singular thing is that in the auditorium every morning, at the close of worship, a large class of young men, a department of the Sunday school, assembles to study the lesson for the day. Many of the young men are members both of the church and the Epworth League. Probably fifty or more of them were in the church, and yet they let two excellent young strangers come and go, and in all the company there was not a young man with business tact and Christian fraternity enough to welcome the two visitors, who were not boys, but tall, conspicuous young men, nor invite them to join the Sunday school class. How many times the experiment could be repeated is uncertain, but very likely, from the sample, an indefinite number.

It not unfrequently happens that in neglecting strangers we throw away, or miss securing,

those who would be of great advantage to our cause and our Church in the future.

Years ago the son of a devoted Methodist mother left his country home to make his fortune in the city of Boston. His mother was very poor, and a widow. The boy had been most carefully trained, was a converted boy, was a member of the church, and had the promise of great usefulness. He had always lived in the country, was timid, diffident, and retiring in his nature, and all the more so under the changed conditions of city life. The first Sunday in the city he sought out, as his mother had suggested, a Methodist church. Doubtless his clothes were not especially gay nor fine, and he was just a poor country boy, and not especially attractive in his appearance, the result of all which was that he waited a long time for a seat, and then the janitor, or sexton, dropped him into the back seat of all, under the shadow of the gallery. After the benediction he took his departure, and not a word had been spoken to him by man, woman, or child. The orphan boy, commencing a struggle for life, was completely overlooked. No one cared for his soul, or body either. This experience continued for

seven successive Sundays, and then in complete desperation, absolutely frozen out of this Methodist church, it occurred to him that he would drop into a Baptist church that he had passed every Sunday morning as he had been going to his own. Scarcely was he inside the door before a genial, warm-hearted usher took him by the hand and in the pleasantest way said, "Good morning. You haven't been long in the city. Glad to see you out to church so early. Hope you will keep up the good habit. Let me give you a good seat now, and every morning look for me and I will see you are well taken care of; and, by the way, we want you in our Sunday school; and what is your name, and where do you board?" Down went the young man's name and address in a little book, and he was shown into a nice seat, and the young man from that day on was a Baptist. In the final event he became a very prosperous merchant, an enthusiastic Baptist, and one of the most efficient church and Sunday school workers of the Baptist Church in all Massachusetts. The Baptist usher was wise; the Methodist, in this case, was exceedingly foolish.

The unthinkable carelessness, indifference, not to say stupidity, of very many of our peo-

ple in regard to looking out for strangers is so common that illustrations multiply on every hand. Long years ago, when I was a student in college, I had occasion to spend a Sunday in one of the larger towns on the Hudson River, not very far above New York city. Going to the Methodist church in good season, I lingered a long while in the vestibule waiting for the usher to show me a seat, but he and the in-going people were alike oblivious to my presence, so that finally I walked in and helped myself to a seat, where the cushions did not appear to be much used; and, as the case turned out, I had the whole pew, the fourth from the pulpit, to myself. At the close of the service a class meeting was announced, and while the congregation dispersed I remained in my pew, while those who remained to attend the class meeting gathered in the front pews. The preacher led the class, speaking to each one in turn, and while I was not twenty feet away from him he ignored my presence, concluded the meeting, and then the people arose to take their leave, with no little chattering and hand-shaking and general sociability. Then the idea came to me that I would test their style of fraternity, and so passing down the aisle to

the outer door, the only one that was open, I took my stand on the threshold in such a way that no man or woman could pass out without coming near enough to touch me with the extended elbow, and there I remained till preacher and all had passed out, busy with themselves and their gossip, and not one in all the number had apparently noticed me, much less had spoken to me, until at last, while I was meditating upon the event, the janitor came along and shut and locked the door while I was standing close to the threshold, and, like the others, he was so taken up with his thoughts or business that he uttered not a word. Why will people persist in doing such things, and so turning away from the house of God hungry people, who might be won for Christ and much service by a warm hand-shake, a kind word, and some slight attention that real Christian love would naturally incite and prompt?

What every church member needs is a feeling of personal responsibility to look after strangers and see that no one comes within reach without a cordial welcome and an invitation to come again. Especially the young people drifting into our churches ought to be cared for most sedulously and lovingly, that

we may turn them not only to our membership, but that we may win them from those influences and associations that are so abundant, enticing, and destructive.

It is surprising how many years good people can go to the same church and not know each other. In our larger city churches those who sit on one side of the church may be as much strangers to those who sit on the other side as though they did not belong to the same congregation. It is also true that in some of our churches strangers may drop in from time to time and never hear a word of welcome, and never receive an invitation to come again. There is special danger in this respect in regard to young people and strangers in humble life who frequent our churches.

There ought to be a radical change in many of our places of worship in regard to the treatment of strangers. First of all the pastor should set the example of cordial sociability. Let him learn the happy art of greeting strangers kindly, and shaking hands with them in a genial, courteous manner. He need not gush —in fact, he ought not to do so—but he can be really and truly interested, and should treat the poor and the rich with equal consideration.

If this be the duty of the pastor, none the less is it the duty of the people: Every church member, whether young or old, ought to feel a personal responsibility for "the strangers within the gates." How many hearts would be cheered by a kind word! A lonesome feeling fills the heart when away from home. This is true in the case of the one who enters for the first time a house of worship where all is unfamiliar and where all faces are strange. Why do not all Christian people watch for such, and take the pains to speak to them, find out their names and their residences, and then call on them, and ask the pastor to do the same. Our American people are nomadic, they are forever going about from one end of the country to the other. They are in danger of becoming strangers in a strange land. They must be noticed and cared for when they come into our churches. Let every church member do his or her full duty and there will be no longer cause for complaint. We plead for more friendliness and more sociability in all our congregations. This is one of the sure ways to fill our houses of worship and build up enduring congregations.

CHAPTER XIV

Saving the Children

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Saving the Children

Shepherd of tender youth,
Guiding in love and truth
  Through devious ways;
Christ our triumphant King,
We come thy name to sing;
Hither our children bring
  To shout thy praise.
—Trans. by H. M. Dexter.

Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.—John xxi, 15.

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.—Mark x, 14.

He who saves the children saves the church. The children will not be saved unless an effort be made to save them. First of all, parents are responsible, then the pastor, then the Sunday school teacher. The relation of the pastor to the children is very peculiar and interesting. His words, whether spoken in church or the home, are sure to make a lasting impression on the mind of the child. A smile, a pleasant

word, go a long way with a child. A rough word, an unkind action, may give a child a prejudice against preachers that will be life-long.

"A pebble in the brooklet scant
Has turned the course of many a river;
A dewdrop on the baby plant
Has warped the giant oak forever."

It is worthy of notice that in these days, in very many respects, more attention is paid to children than ever in the past. This ought to be the case in religious matters; indeed, it is to some extent. The Romanists, who in their generation are wiser than the children of light, if Protestants may be regarded as the children of the light, have taken care that their children should be carefully and thoroughly instructed in the dogmas of their faith. Two little girls were once discussing their respective religious training. One was a Romanist, the other a Protestant. Finally the little Protestant exclaimed, "I would not believe such nonsense." "Yes," replied the little Romanist, "and I would not either, but I just have to believe it." She believed it whether or no, because she had been persistently taught it. The Romish hierarchy has more care for children under ten or

twelve years of age than for any other class of its adherents, unless it is for aged rich people whose money it seeks. The result is that the children, in spite of their association with Protestant children, and in spite of their attendance on the public schools, become the stanch followers of the Church and faith in which they have been trained.

How long shall we be in learning a lesson of wisdom from the example that is set before us? It must be confessed that our present Sunday schools are not really training schools, where the children are indoctrinated in the fundamentals of Christian faith. The courses of study lack the essential elements of continuity and definiteness of purpose. They do not have clear and pronounced inculcation of our doctrines. They touch here and there upon matter of faith, but being interdenominational they are decidedly indeterminate, and often vague and uncertain. If we wish for a generation of intelligent and substantial Methodists we must train them carefully in our own doctrines. The best way to do this is to teach them our catechism. We are well supplied with catechisms. There is an excellent one by Z. A. Mudge designed for little children. Then we have Num-

bers 1, 2, and 3. The doctrines are the same in all, only somewhat more fully set forth in the numbers as they advance.

It would be a most blessed thing if the parents would give an hour or two each week to instructing their children in the catechism. But whether or not they attend to this duty, it is the duty of every pastor to see that the children are not neglected. The Discipline is very explicit in regard to this matter. It enumerates the duties of every pastor, and among these duties it says it is the duty of the pastor, of every pastor, "to catechise the children publicly in the Sunday school, and at special meetings appointed for that purpose, and also privately; to report to each Quarterly Conference the extent to which he has done this work." If this duty were faithfully performed the next generation of Methodists would be rooted and grounded in the faith, and would not be drawn hither and thither by every foolish fad and skeptical pretense and conscienceless critic. In these days the world needs people with creeds.

CHAPTER XV

Sunday School and Epworth League

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Sunday School and Epworth League

Father of mercies, in thy word
What endless glory shines!
Forever be thy name adored
For these celestial lines.

—*Anne Steele.*

O may the gracious words divine,
Subject of all my converse be;
So will the Lord his follower join,
And walk and talk himself with me:
So shall my heart his presence prove,
And burn with everlasting love.

—*Charles Wesley.*

Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.—John v, 39.

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.—2 Tim. iii, 14, 15.

For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest

thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons.—Deut. iv, 7-9.

Two and a half millions and more are enrolled in the Sunday schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Year by year the number increases. Our schools are organized and operated in all climes. They thrive beneath the Southern Cross. They are planted within the Arctic Circle. They are a power for good wherever they exist. They inspire and inform the intellect. They teach the highest style of morals the world has ever known. They encourage, foster, develop, and fructify the divine spiritual life in the soul. They are the hope of the Church and the world. They must be active, potent, and wisely directed in the three all-important particulars just mentioned. No Sunday school can justify its existence unless it has a constant care for the intellectual, moral, and spiritual life of those who make up its membership. Most of those who are enrolled in our Sunday schools are young people, the vast majority being under twenty-five years of age. They are in the formative period of life. They are not fixed, settled, grounded in their

opinions, convictions, and habits. They are especially susceptible to all influences which surround them. They are open to influences that are helpful, heavenly, benignant; at the same time they are as open to influences that are harmful, worldly, malignant. The arch enemy of all goodness and of all youth is not a careless spectator of our Sunday schools. He stands by the threshold of every home and sees the young people as they set out for the Sunday school room; he follows them along the street, it may be tempting them by the way; and most likely he finds a place with the people of God even within the sacred walls of the Sunday school room. We cannot have the sole and unchallenged opportunity to influence and direct the minds of our young people. A thousand snares and pitfalls beset their pathways; a thousand bewildering allurements dazzle their wondering eyes; a thousand persuasive voices call them away from the narrow path of life, and encourage them to enter the broad way that with artful but satanic hands has been strewn with what appears to be flowers as beautiful and fragrant as ever bloomed in paradise. Surely it will be no small and feeble effort that can hold young souls to the

ways of penitence, faith, and holy living when they are confronted by all these things that are well calculated to touch the deepest sensibilities of their natures, and to which all that is within them that is earthly, depraved, and sinful so naturally and sympathetically responds.

The only way for our young people to overcome in this mighty conflict that comes to all, the only way to reach the best results intellectually, morally, and spiritually, is through repentance and faith, which ultimate in a sound, clear, definite conversion—a conversion that is consciously received, and then witnessed to by the direct testimony of the Holy Ghost. To bring our young people to such an experience as this, an experience which involves the idea of heart purity, a renunciation of all worldliness, a devotement of all the powers and faculties of body, mind, and soul, ought to be the constant desire and ambition of every worker in all our Sunday schools, from the superintendent down to the youngest and humblest teacher. There must be this desire and ambition, or the work will never be accomplished. We find what we seek. We hit the mark at which we aim. We accomplish the purpose for which we consecrate our lives. Surely we

may fail even when we have done our very best. But, then, and always, let us say to our souls:

"Fear not;
For all may have, if they dare try,
A glorious life or grave."

But in these harvest fields of God it is absolutely sure that failure can never come to those who join themselves to God and are the holy and helpful influences of earth and heaven. The word of the heavenly Father assures us that "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." And Jesus himself says: "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life." The double promise makes it sure that "we cannot toil in vain."

In every Sunday school in our Church there ought to be a revival every year. Such a consummation ought to be expected, and preparations for it ought to be made with as much method and forecast as the farmer gives to the production of his crops. The farmer has the divine promise that seedtime and harvest shall never fail. All workers for souls have promises just as sure, and as often verified in all

parts of the world and in all ages of the Church, that spiritual harvests will be gathered when God's husbandry comply with the possible and easily understood laws and conditions of the kingdom of grace.

That the Sunday school may measure up to its opportunity in revival effort it is essential that the superintendent should be a truly converted man. He must be a godly man. He must enjoy the sweetness of the Gospel in his own soul. He must manifest the fruits of the Spirit in his daily life, and especially in his intercourse with both teachers and scholars. In all these respects every teacher ought to be like the superintendent. And, here—pardon the word of earnest persuasion—if these words should be read by any Sunday school worker who confesses to his own soul that he does not come up to the required standard, I beg of you without delay to enter some secret place where you may be alone with God, and resolve that you will never cease your efforts, never cease your prayers and tears, until you are personally saved to the uttermost, and graciously filled with the Holy Ghost, and so prepared for the all-important work to which you are called. I once knew a most exemplary young teacher

who had a class of fifteen young ladies from sixteen to twenty-two years of age, and not one of them had ever made a profession of religion. They were, like so many young ladies of their age, more concerned for worldly pleasure than for the eternal interests of their souls. For more than a year their teacher had constantly been in her place; she was faithful and beloved; but month after month passed, and her class seemed to be drifting away from God. At length the teacher's heart was troubled; she could not rest. She asked herself, "How can I answer to God for these precious souls?" A time of serious heart-searching followed, in which it was revealed to her that she was not just right herself. For nearly three weeks she cried out for divine help, and at last her prayer was heard and answered, and she came into the enjoyment of a richer, deeper, clearer, sweeter experience of salvation than she had ever known. Then there came to her a wonderful burden of soul for her class. Night and day her prayers went up to God for his help, and for the convincing and convicting grace of the Holy Ghost. Thus she prayed until two weeks had passed, until she had the witness that her prayer was answered. She went to her

pastor and told him of her experience and her hope that her class would be converted, and urged him, at the close of the Sabbath evening service, to invite penitents to come forward for prayers. The pastor heeded her request; that first Sabbath evening three of the young women went forward for prayers; a week from that time five more of the class went forward; and two weeks later the remaining seven were at the altar, and the entire fifteen were blessedly converted, and in due time joined the Church on probation, and at the close of their probation they were all received into the Church in full connection. In the meantime the revival spread, and more than a hundred besides the fifteen were converted and became connected with the Church.

These are the days of the Sunday school and the Epworth League, and no wise pastor will neglect, much less ignore, these two most important departments of our Church forces when he plans a revival campaign. If the officers and teachers of the Sunday school, and if the young Christians of the Epworth League, consecrate themselves to the active, aggressive work of winning souls to Christ they can most effectually help on the revival. The pastor

ought to keep so thoroughly and constantly in touch with the young Christians and Sunday school workers that he can certainly count on their cooperation. It only needs a little judicious consultation and consequent agreement as to time and method of work, and the Epworth League and Sunday school will stand side by side with the pastor and the official board for the prosecution of services that look to the salvation of multitudes of precious souls. Not by the exercise of authority, nor by compulsion, never by threats and scolding, can this combination of the working forces of the Church be secured; but rather by the manifestation on the part of the pastor of the spirit of Christ, by tender love for souls, by earnest devotion to the work of God, by a supreme personal consecration of all powers and faculties to the rescue of the perishing, and by that gracious endowment of power which only comes when the soul is baptized with the Holy Ghost and filled with his abiding presence.

O, for the spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind on the part of all our preachers, so that they may successfully lead the forces of the militant Church forth to such victories as shall cause joy on earth and in heaven! O, that they

may never forget that to give efficiency to wisest plans and hardest work there is constant need of the help and guidance of the Comforter.

CHAPTER XVI

Help for the Sorrowing and Suffering

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Help for the Sorrowing and Suffering

Blest be the tie that binds
  Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
  Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne,
  We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
  Our comforts and our cares.

—*John Fawcett.*

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.—Rom. xii, 15.

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.—2 Cor. i, 3, 4.

There are suffering people everywhere. There are sorrowing people everywhere. There are burdened, breaking hearts everywhere. More than the fortunate and happy ever imagine are they who walk life's journey with sad and heavy hearts. There are sorrows

that come from poverty and sorrows that come from sin. There are griefs that burden weary souls because of disease and weakness of body, and other griefs as great or greater that result from the loss of loved ones. To all the smitten, suffering, and discouraged the good pastor is indeed a son of consolation. Doubtless there are numberless records of sin and sorrow and suffering, but one is now lying before me that has greatly touched my heart. The pastor who is giving a report of his work says: "The past month has been taken up as follows: I have made eighty regular pastoral calls; held eight preaching services; attended four sessions of the Sunday school, and led a Bible class; held after-services following the preaching on Sunday evenings; attended four weekly prayer meetings and two class meetings; officiated at several funerals, and been constant in labors among the sick and poor." Here is a sample of one afternoon's work: "Called where the wife and mother of two children is in trouble. The younger child is only four weeks old. The father got drunk a few nights since, fell in the street, and cut his head very badly, was brought home at two o'clock in the morning, routed the poor woman up,

while three policemen dragged in the helpless sot. She has not slept for three nights, the husband in the meantime being only semiconscious. They are poor, and have nothing with which to pay rent or purchase food." Another family not far from the one just mentioned: "Wife and four children, the youngest only a few weeks old. The husband drinking up all he earns, the mother sick, and the family left without the necessities of life." Another family still: "Wife and five children, and all the children sick, nothing in the house to eat, no means to buy anything; landlord threatening to turn the family outdoors; the husband full of licensed beer. . . . And so I might take you to a score of such families who attend our church if they attend anywhere."

And all this in this so-called Christian land. It is enough to cause the hot blood of righteous wrath to stir every heart that is loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ. What an unspeakable shame and disgrace that the Christian people of this day and generation will tolerate the traffic that curses so many homes! If the drink habit is a sin, then it is the duty of all good people to remove the temptation to sin. If the drink habit is a disease, then the deadly

poison that induces the disease ought to be put quite out of the reach of the sick.

These facts in a pastor's experience show us that vast, difficult, and most discouraging obstructions lie in the pathway of the faithful pastor. If we wait for outside organizations to remove them we shall wait in vain. If we wait for organizations within the church, our waiting will not avail. There is only one sure way to do the work of God committed to the hands of God's ambassadors—they must do it themselves. According to the strength and wisdom given them, they must consecrate themselves to seeking out the wretched, the outcasts, the slaves of sin, and with tender sympathy, mighty faith, and tireless love lift up and lead to Christ even the most hopeless. Such service calls for uttermost devotement, self-denial, and self-sacrifice, but in such service the soul will find sweetest fellowship with the blessed Christ. The more wretched and hopeless the people, the more need of the pastor's presence, sympathy, and love. The Master alone knows how many and peculiar are the duties of the pastor. There must be a constant and vivid sense of the presence of Jesus in order to their performance.

CHAPTER XVII

Securing and Caring for Converts

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Come to the living waters, come!
  Sinners, obey your Maker's call;
Return, ye weary wanderers, home,
  And find his grace is free for all.

Nothing ye in exchange shall give;
  Leave all you have and are behind;
Frankly the gift of God receive;
  Pardon and peace in Jesus find.

—John Wesley.

Sent by my Lord, on you I call;
The invitation is to all:
Come all the world! come, sinner, thou!
All things in Christ are ready now.

My message as from God receive;
Ye all may come to Christ and live:
O let his love your hearts constrain,
Nor suffer him to die in vain.

—Charles Wesley.

I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.—Matt. ix, 13.

What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?—Luke xv, 4.

Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner

from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.—James v, 20.

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever.—Dan. xii, 3.

ONE great object of effort on the part of every preacher ought to be the conversion of sinners. In every community unconverted people are to be found. Some of them attend religious services, but the vast majority of them seldom or never darken the doors of the house of God. There are three ways in which sinners may be reached. If they attend religious services they place themselves under the direct influence of the Gospel, and so they are within reach of God's people. One way to reach those who are not churchgoers is for the Christians of any given community to search them out from house to house and personally labor with them, and persuade them to turn from sin and accept Christ. Another way is for the pastor to follow the example of the good shepherd who left the ninety and nine sheep gathered within the fold, and went out to seek for the lone wandering member of the flock. And it will be remembered that when the lost was found it was not driven home, but it was ten-

derly taken up in the arms of the shepherd and borne gently to a place of rest and safety.

In this great work of securing converts the pastor must have the active cooperation of his people; indeed, he ought to have the loving, loyal cooperation of all, from the youngest to the oldest. Especially should all unite with the pastor in earnest, believing prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the conversion of the unsaved.

It will be found in eternity that one of the greatest spiritual influences ever wrought by human agency for the salvation of the souls of men is earnest, faithful, effectual prayer. But this prayer in behalf of the unconverted and unsaved can only be offered by those who have a deep personal experience of the divine life. The men and women who have been most successful in their supplications have been those who have lived nearest to the cross and most in conformity to the will of God. If we would have access to the throne we must approach it with pure hearts and clean hands. Then we must be sure that we ask in conformity to the will of God, and in harmony with the divine order. We know that it is the will of God that all should come unto him

and be saved. It is contrary to his will that any soul should go down to death. But with the power of choice and the exercise of free will the sinner can frustrate the grace of God, and in spite of divine love and persuasion and redemption he can choose death for himself and resist successfully all holy influences used for his salvation. God will never break down and destroy the will, and so unmake the man, to save his soul from death. Hence we should never pray, and never expect, that a soul may be saved except in harmony with the attributes with which God has so regally endowed humanity. If Christians will come to God in his own appointed way; if they come, themselves saved with the great salvation, then, if the word of Jesus is true, they may ask what they will and it shall be done unto them. They may also ask in behalf of others, and prayer will be heard and answered just as really as when the man in the gospel went to his neighbor's to ask for bread for a friend who had come to him on a journey, and similar importunate prayer will bring supplies of heavenly bread for hungry souls. Real revivals of religion take place only as the result of the work of the Holy Ghost in human hearts. But the

Lord Jesus Christ, in that most wonderful of sermons recorded in John's gospel, tells us that when he is gone away he will send the Comforter, who shall convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. This means that the Spirit will be given to the unsaved in order to enlighten, convince, and persuade them. The Spirit operates on such hearts in answer to prayer. Special gifts and graces of the Spirit only come in answer to special prayer. It is the duty of all God's people to call upon him in the name of Jesus to give his Spirit in gracious power to visit the hearts of the unsaved. The word of the Master is, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." If all members of the Epworth League could enter into the rich experience of salvation which waits upon their entire consecration and appropriating faith, and if they would make united supplication as first indicated, there would be such revelations of the Holy Ghost made in the hearts of the unconverted as would lead multitudes of them to seek and find the Saviour.

An incident may serve to illustrate. Many might be given, but one must suffice.

Years ago it was my privilege to read the manuscript diary of one of the saints. I knew the writer well in her old age, when, weak and feeble, and past threescore years and ten, she lingered on earth to bless all who knew her. In early life she gave her heart to God, and for many years she kept a diary, and after her death I had the opportunity of reading it.

This good woman lived in a retired though thriving town in New England, in which at the time of her early life there was only one Church. While glancing along the pages of the diary I noticed mention made of the fact that she and two or three other women had been conversing together in regard to the spiritual dearth and low state of religion that prevailed in the Church and community. Looking along, I saw that these same good women had covenanted together to pray for a revival, and were to meet from week to week at each other's homes to hold a prayer meeting for the same purpose. Within three weeks the entry was made that the preacher had been unusually earnest, tender, and impressive, and the sermon had carried with it great spiritual influence. Manifestly, God's

Spirit, in answer to prayer, had reached the pastor's heart, and the revival had commenced right there, and surely it could commence in no better place. Then, as I glanced along the pages, I saw that special meetings were appointed, and then followed the record of awakenings and conversions, and baptisms and additions to the Church. God's work had been revived, and I could not escape the conviction that it had been brought about largely through the instrumentality of these few devoted and faithful women. And so I looked on through the diary until I had found the records of five distinct and separate seasons of revivals in this one Church; and each of them had been preceded by this combination of effort and prayer on the part of these same women.

It does not take the action of the whole membership of any given Church to secure revival. Let every sincere follower of Jesus note and remember this. The enemy of all righteousness has often hindered the faith of God's humble and diffident children, and has as often crippled or defeated their efforts, by making them believe that all the members of the Church must be living near to God and

filled with his Spirit before a revival can be hoped for. No greater delusion was ever entertained, no worse snare was ever spread in the path of God's children. It is the smoking flax and the bruised reed that God remembers and cares for. So, if in any church there is a soul, however weak, that yet has one single spark of grace, and in response to sincere desire and prayer the divine breath shall come to that soul, where is hidden the slumbering spark, even then and there the revival has commenced. If the heavenly flame thus kindled shall be cherished and tended, soon a responsive heart will begin to blaze, and so the work will go on until many will sing:

"See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace!"

Then faith cries out:

"To bring fire on earth he came;
Kindled in some hearts it is:
O that all might catch the flame,
All partake the glorious bliss!"

Then, joyful, trusting, toiling, waiting souls will exclaim:

"Saw ye not the cloud arise,
Little as a human hand?
Now it spreads along the skies,
Hangs o'er all the thirsty land;

Lo! the promise of a shower
Drops already from above;
But the Lord will shortly pour
All the Spirit of his love."

But work must be conjoined with prayer and faith. When all gifts and graces have been received, and when prayer has been offered in behalf of the unconverted, there yet remain as the duty of every Christian direct and personal labors for the salvation of the unconverted. The real enjoyment of religion, the witness of the Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, all imply that there is contemporaneous with these, and concomitant with these, a holy and unblamable life. There must be this holy life, or the unconverted will have no real confidence in the genuineness of the profession of religion made with the lips. If any Christian, young or old, lead a pure, upright, and holy life, such life is a convincing and unanswerable argument for the reality and excellence of the Christian religion, and at the same time it exerts a powerful influence upon all who are its subjects. It must be noted that all this involves the idea that worldliness, and frivolity, and pleasure-seeking, and, in fact, everything that is out of harmony with the best type of religious ex-

perience, must be laid aside. But this must be done by everyone who wishes the richest experience of divine blessing, the greatest spiritual influence, and the highest success in winning souls to Christ.

It would be exceedingly profitable for all members of the Epworth League if they could select from among their most intimate unconverted friends a few, say five or ten, more or less, and write down their names, and then mention each one of these names daily in prayer, and plead with God for Jesus' sake to send the Spirit with convincing power to each one of these precious souls; and it would help in this if two or three of our young Leaguers should combine their lists and covenant together to make special supplication for the unsaved loved ones. They might well remember the promise of the Saviour, "that if two of you should agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." But after all has been done, and all prayers have been offered, there will remain the duty of going to the unsaved and pleading earnestly and perseveringly, and yet very tenderly, with them to give themselves to

Christ. There must be care and wisdom in this work, or it will be all in vain. The time and place are all-important. In almost every case it is better to take the unconverted separately and alone, rather than in company, seek a quiet hour free from all distractions, study the moods and the temperament, never unduly urge, never lose faith or patience, never be discouraged, ask the guidance and help of the Holy Spirit. Of course Epworth Leaguers ought to be very faithful in their attendance upon all the means of grace, and they ought to bear the cross, in giving in their testimony and in vocal prayer in the social meetings, but above and beyond all this they must live holy lives, and they must engage in this direct personal effort. Let them always remember that "he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal;" that "he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

If our young people of the Epworth League will fully give themselves up to the Lord and his work revivals will become perennial, and the harvest time will last all the year. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the

firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

If preacher and people will search out the unsaved, whether in the congregation or by the wayside, whether in the byways and hedges, or in the Sabbath schools, or wherever they may be found, and then tell them personally of the peril of sin, the need of repentance and faith, the love of Christ, the willingness of God to bless and save, and especially tell them of the joy, the love, the peace, the comfort, and the blessed hopes of the Christian life, converts will be secured.

It is not enough that we secure converts. We must care for them. The first thing to be done is to have them unite with the church. This is said on the assumption that they are really converted and have found Christ in the pardon of their sins. It is not wise to urge awakened souls to join the church, much less is it wise to urge those to do so who in a moment of excitement have felt that they ought to turn from sin. The reason why so many probationers fail to become full members of the church is because many join on probation who have not been converted. An awakened soul ought to be watched over and aided

until a clear and definite experience is attained. Then wise and careful effort should be made to secure the names of all such for membership on probation. In this work the pastor must take an active part. He should know all converts. He should make himself their friend and adviser. But in all this he should be assisted by class leaders, and other officials of the church, and in fact by all the church members. The newborn soul ought to be received with a warm welcome, and should be made to feel that in coming into the church it has come to a glad company of the great family of God's people. The average church member can scarcely realize how much encouragement can be given to any young convert by a warm grasp of the hand and a cheerful word.

Lord of the living harvest
  That whitens o'er the plain,
Where angels soon shall gather
  Their sheaves of golden grain;
Accept these hands to labor,
  These hearts to trust and love,
And deign with them to hasten
  Thy kingdom from above.

As laborers in thy vineyard,
  Send us, O Christ, to be
Content to bear the burdens
  Of weary days for thee;

We ask no other wages,
When thou shalt call us home,
But to have shared the travail
Which makes thy kingdom come.

Come down, thou Holy Spirit!
And fill our souls with light,
Clothe us in spotless raiment,
In linen clean and white;
Beside thy sacred altar
Be with us, where we stand,
To sanctify thy people
Through all this happy land.

—*J. S. B. Monsell.*

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.—Jude 24, 25.

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